Parish Prints
Quarter 2 - Summer 2012

Mission Statement
To Know Him and to Make Him Known

Vision Statement
Prince of Peace is a vibrant cross-generational Christian family. Lifelong Christian education defines who we are, love each other, making our community of faith grow stronger. This bond empowers us to boldly serve our neighbors in ways that show them Jesus, and bring them to faith in Him.

Growth in the Spirit

Flowers are interesting “creatures”. They don’t seem at all concerned with their circumstances. As seeds, they simply land where they will, and with no regard for the particular merits of the surface on which they find themselves, they do what they were created to do: sprout, grow and bloom.

I’ve seen flowers in some of the most unexpected places - from cracks in the sidewalk to rusted containers to barren patches of dirt. You’d think they’d wilt anything I put out, so why bother! “how did I end up in this crevice? It would be so much easier if I had some actual soil to work with!”

But they don’t. Whether in the richest part of the darkest garden soil, or in the most desolate and inhospitable of surroundings, they are faithful to live out their design. Wherever they find themselves, whatever their situation, they just go about the work they were created to do: sprout, grow and bloom. And because they do, we get to enjoy their sweetness.

God created an unbelievable variety of flowers in the world, and He put them all over the place so that we could watch them and ponder...I wonder if He’s trying to tell us something?

“Bloom Where You Are Planted” Pastor Dan

Our theme for this issue of the Parish Prints Journal is “Growth in the Spirit.” Wherever we look, especially at this time of the year, there are huge amounts of green spreading through trees, shrubs and flowers. In the church the liturgical color green is the predominant color of the Pentecost season (which spans Pentecost Sunday, May 27th through November 25th). The lessons we hear in worship and take home with us in our Vibrant Faith devotional inserts lead us through processes of spiritual growth.

Several years ago I heard a pastor use the phrase, “bloom where you are planted.” It kind of caught my ear and stayed with me. For a time it even became a “buzz phrase” that everyone seemed to use. I’m not sure where it came from; the exact words are not in Scripture, but the message is conveyed in several passages - in the Psalms and Jeremiah we read - “be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.”

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God sends us the Spirit to bring growth to our lives. We are privileged to be receivers of His abundance wherever we are.

For the Journey

Sometimes we see growth taking place when we least expect it; just a few weeks ago I took of picture of our marionberry vines and there was but one white flower; today I can barely see the greenery for all the berries to be replaced by all the berries – it looks like another prolific year! I had nothing to do with it. It reminds me of Jesus’ words from the sermon on the Mount, “the lilies neither labor nor spin… yet not even Solomon...was dressed in such splendor…” (Matthew 5:28ff).

Through the waters of baptism, the elements of the Lord’s Supper, God’s precious Word, and our family of faith, God’s Spirit comes to us and brings growth. May we respond and “Bloom where we are planted.”
“The Value of Fellowship”  Jeff Freericks

Think about how fellowship is often a carelessly employed word, used to describe a social evening or a casual encounter. But fellowship implies that those who share it are fellows in some common cause or interest. Anything that threatens the faith of a single one of us threatens the entire fellowship. Therefore, the New Testament letters are full of instructions for fellowship—about caring for one another, getting along together, and bearing one another’s burdens. Because we live in a time when individuality and self-reliance are stressed, Christians need to be reminded of the value of belonging to the body of Christ. Our fellowship is a gift from God. We need it; we should enjoy it.

What on earth does this have to do with fellowship events we do at Prince of Peace like this summer’s first ever Family Camp? The great thing about camping together is that it is much more than a social evening or casual encounter. To be sure we will have social evenings and casual encounters. There will be games, deviations, and singing songs around a campfire. But my prayer is that our camping will bring we and sisters in Christ, together in our common cause; our belonging in Christ’s family. Being a family implies spending time together and getting to know each other’s joys and share each other’s burdens.

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“We Need to Talk” Jeff Kranich

They want to know what you know - the the trouble is, you don’t text, so they’re not sure how to ask. Just like us, they figure it’s easier to guess at the right answers with their friends than to try and start a conversation with someone older who might think less of them for not already knowing the answers to the questions they have.

We all fear rejection or ridicule, and we all want to be loved and accepted for who we are regardless of what we know or don’t know. One of the greatest gifts you can give to a Teen is to take the risk to start a conversation and find out what their life is like. As you develop a trusting relationship you open the door to deeper conversations they want to have with you about things that really matter, like Faith, Love, Courage, Resilience, Integrity, and Self-Esteem. Take a chance - talk to a Teen and let them know how much you care. I guarantee that not only will you help that Teen grow, but you will find yourself enriched and strengthened by the conversation as well.

“Reections on Adult Bible Study” Andy Westlund

I first began teaching adult bible classes at Prince of Peace nearly twenty years ago. This was an unexpected path along my spiritual journey; never before thought I had the aptitude or desire to lead other adults in the study of God’s Word.

For the past four years I have had the privilege of directing our Adult Education program. My primary objective has been to offer one—and only one—biblically based and culturally relevant adult bible class each Sunday. I wanted our members and guests to have a simple and consistent choice about where to go on Sunday mornings at 9:15, and I wanted our class leaders to be rewarded for their preparation with full classes. The approach has paid off. We have averaged over 16 attendees per class session during this time frame.

This summer Valorie and I are relocating to West Linn, bringing a more long-distance relationship to our fellowship with Prince of Peace. Although we will be attending another church in a regular basis, our hearts will always be with the congregation that baptized and confirmed our two sons.

O ur personal transition comes at a time when Prince of Peace is in need of more member-leaders for the Adult Education program. I am hopeful that, as a group, we can do something that will be meaningful and valuable for all.

Education Service Youth Relationships